

The Examiner is respectfully requested to amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 2, 3, 9, 11, 12, 18 and 39-49, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein.

Please amend Claims 1, 4-6, 10, 13-15, and 19-38, and add Claims 50-54 to read as follows. A marked-up copy of those claims, showing the changes made thereto, is attached.

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1. (Amended) An image search apparatus for searching an image database for desired image data, said image database storing a plurality of image data in correspondence with image feature amounts for each of the image data, comprising:

- display means for displaying a plurality of image data;
- selection means for selecting image data designated by a user from the plurality of image data;
- image feature amount computing means for computing an image feature amount of the image data selected by said selection means;
- image similarity computing means for computing image similarity on the basis of the image feature amount computed by said image feature amount computing means, and the image feature amounts of the image data stored in said image database.

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4. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said display means displays image data randomly selected from the image data stored in said image database.

5. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said display means displays designated image data of the image data stored in said image database.

6. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said display means comprises search means for searching for desired image data by designating attribute information appended to the image data, and
when a search is made by said search means, said display means displays a list of image data found by the search of said search means.

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10. (Amended) An image search method for searching an image database for desired image data, said image database storing a plurality of image data in correspondence with image feature amounts for each of the image data, comprising:

a display step, of displaying a plurality of image data;

a selection step, of selecting image data designated by a user from the plurality of image data;

an image feature amount computing step, of computing an image feature amount of an image data selected by said selection step;

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an image similarity computing step, of computing image similarity on

the basis of the image feature amount computed in the image feature amount computing step, and
the image feature amounts of the image data stored in said image database.

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13. (Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein the display step includes a step of displaying, as a default window, image data randomly selected from the image data stored in said image database.

14. (Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein the display step includes a step of displaying, as a default window, designated image data of the image data stored in image database.

15. (Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein the display step comprises a search step, of searching for desired image data by designating attribute information appended to the image data, and
the display step includes a step of displaying a list of image data found
by a search in the search step, when the search is made in the search step.

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19. (Amended) A computer readable memory that stores a program code of
an image search for searching an image database for desired image data, said image database
storing a plurality of image data in correspondence with image feature amounts of each of the
image data,

comprising:

program code for a display step, of displaying a plurality of image data;

program code for a selection step, of selecting image data designated by

a user from the plurality of image data;

program code for an image feature amount computing step, of

computing an image feature amount of the image data selected by said selection step;

program code for an image similarity computing step, of computing

image similarity on the basis of the image feature amount computed in the image feature amount

computing step, and the image feature amounts of the image data stored in said image database.

20. (Amended) An image search apparatus for searching an image database

for desired image data, said image database storing a plurality of image data in correspondence

with image feature amounts for each of the image data, comprising:

display means for displaying a drawing area for drawing handwritten

information, and a plurality of image data searched on the basis of the handwritten information

drawn in the drawing area;

selection means for selecting color information of image data

designated by a user from the plurality of image data;

image feature amount computing means for computing an image

feature amount of the image having the color information selected by said selection means;

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image similarity computing means for computing image similarity on the basis of the image feature amount computed by said image feature amount computing means, and the image feature amounts of the image data stored in said image database.

21. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the color information is selected by indicating one pixel in the image data.

22. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the color information is selected by indicating a predetermined region in the image data.

23. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the color information designated by indicating the predetermined region is an average value of pixel values contained in the small region.

24. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the color information is selected on the basis of image data to be displayed by said display means.

25. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the color information is selected on the basis of image data which corresponds to image data displayed by said display means, and is stored in said image database.

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26. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the color information is selected on the basis of an image drawn on the drawing area.

27. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said image feature amount computing means computes the image feature amount of the drawn image every time the image in the drawing area is modified.

28. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising display control means for controlling to display the drawing area within a display window displayed by said display means.

29. (Amended) An image search method for searching an image database for desired image data, said image database storing a plurality of image data in correspondence with image feature amounts for each of the image data, comprising:

a display step, of displaying a drawing area for drawing handwritten information, and a plurality of image data searched on the basis of the handwritten information drawn in the drawing area;

a selection step, of selecting color information of image data designated by a user from the plurality of image data;

an image feature amount computing step, of computing an image feature amount of an image having the color information selected by said selection step;

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an image similarity computing step, of computing image similarity on the basis of the image feature amount computed in the image feature amount computing step, and the image feature amounts of the image data stored in said image database;

30. (Amended) The method according to claim 29, wherein the color information is selected by indicating one pixel in the image data.

31. (Amended) The method according to claim 29, wherein the color information is selected by indicating a predetermined region in the image data.

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32. (Amended) The method according to claim 31, wherein the color information designated by indicating the predetermined region is an average value of pixel values contained in the small region.

33. (Amended) The method according to claim 29, wherein the color information is selected on the basis of image data to be displayed in said display step.

34. (Amended) The method according to claim 29, wherein the color information is selected on the basis of image data which corresponds to image data displayed in said display step, and is stored in said image database.

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35. (Amended) The method according to claim 29, wherein the color information is selected on the basis of an image drawn on the drawing area.

36. (Amended) The method according to claim 29, wherein the image feature amount computing step includes the step of computing the image feature amount of the drawn image every time the image in the drawing area is modified.

37. (Amended) The method according to claim 29, further comprising a display control step, of controlling to display the drawing area within a display window displayed in the display step.

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38. (Amended) A computer readable memory that stores a program code of an image search for searching an image database for desired image data, said image database storing a plurality of image data in correspondence with image feature amounts for each of the image data, comprising:

program code for a display step, of displaying a drawing area for drawing handwritten information, and a plurality of image data searched on the basis of the handwritten information drawn in the drawing area;

program code for a selection step, of selecting color information of image data designated by a user from the plurality of image data;

program code for an image feature amount computing step, of
computing an image feature amount of an image having the color information selected by said
selection step;

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program code for an image similarity computing step, of computing
image similarity on the basis of the image feature amount computed in said image feature amount
computing step, and the image feature amounts of the image data stored in said image database.

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50. (New) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said image data
selected by said selection means is copied in a drawing area;

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said image similarity computing means computes image similarity on
the basis of an image feature amount, computed by said image feature amount computing means,
of the image data copied in the drawing area, and the image feature amounts of the image data
stored in said image database.

51. (New) The apparatus according to claim 50, further comprising
modifying means for modifying the image data copied in the drawing area;

said image similarity computing means computes image similarity on
the basis of an image feature amount, computed by said image feature amount computing means,
of the image data modified by said modifying means, and the image feature amounts of the image
data stored in said image database.

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52. (New) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of image data displayed by said display means is displayed on the basis of image similarity computed by said image similarity computing means.

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53. (New) The apparatus according to claim 50, wherein said drawing area and said plurality of image data are displayed in the same window.

54. (New) The apparatus according to claim 50, wherein said drawing area draws handwritten information input by a user.

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 20, 2002. Claims 1, 4-8, 10, 13-17, 19-38, and 50-54 are presented for examination. Claims 2, 3, 9, 11, 12, 18, and 39-49 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Claims 1, 4-6, 10, 13-15, and 19-38 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regards as their invention. Claims 50-54 have been added to provide Applicants with a more complete scope of protection. Claims 1, 10, 19, 20, 29, and 38 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,237,010 B1 (*Hui et al.*) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,249,607 (*Murakawa*).

Cancellation of Claims 2, 3, 9, 11, 12, 18, and 39-49 render their rejection moot.